

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 226.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1868.

PRICE 1½d.

DISAPPEARANCES.

THE sudden disappearance of individuals from the midst of society implies in almost every instance mental aberration or crime. Skeletons found in mines, in coal-pits, in disused wells, in quarries, in the walls of ruins, in ploughed fields immediately beneath the surface of the soil, imply so many social mysteries which probably occasioned in their day a wide-spread excitement, or at least agitated profoundly some small circle of relatives and friends. By some law scarcely intelligible to ordinary minds, many persons are urged into the perpetration of acts so little analogous to the general habits of their species, that they are held to proceed from madness; though, if all the circumstances of the case were known, it might be found that they were based on reasonable, or at least on intelligible grounds. Every man may say with the poet: 'My mind to me a kingdom is,' because within that domain, whether limited or extensive, he bears absolute sway, his subjects being ideas, which he can marshal and compel in this or that direction at pleasure; but, when his ideas rise in rebellion, and refuse to obey his will, the kingdom is converted into an anarchy, and the man, from being the master, becomes the slave of his own thoughts. In this state there is no knowing what he may or may not do. In nearly all conditions of mind, men derive satisfaction from exciting astonishment or wonder among their neighbours, and causing themselves to be talked of or speculated about, since they thus become more acutely conscious of their own existence, and believe themselves to be of some consequence in the world. No matter to such persons how this is brought about, whether the means be dignified or undignified, wise or foolish; one of our contemporaries to whom notoriety has been always as the breath of life, finding the public flag in its attention to his doings, forwarded to one of the journals in a feigned hand an account of his own death, that he might gratify his vanity by becoming for a few days the subject of general conversation, and reading the eulogiums which he felt certain would

be pronounced upon him. The plan succeeded only in part: people certainly did talk a great deal about him, but instead of the unmingled praises on which he had reckoned, he had the mortification to see himself severely censured, and to discover that the general estimate of his abilities was considerably lower than that which he himself made of them.

About two hundred years ago a literary man of some eminence, distinguished as a scholar and admired as a professor, who had visited the most remarkable seats of learning and schools of philosophy then in vogue, gave a shock to public opinion by vanishing, so to speak, in an instant. From his own country Flanders, then disturbed by civil war, he had passed into France, where as a professor of Greek he enjoyed considerable distinction. Walking out one day while the streets of the town in which he lived were full of people, a gentleman standing at a door on the opposite side of the road beckoned to him, and in the sight of many to whom he was known he crossed and entered the house. From that moment he was never again seen; his friends, his auditors, the magistrates, and other public authorities of the place, made search and instituted all possible inquiries to no purpose:

Moons rolled on moons away;

But Conrad comes not—came not since that day.

Whether the worthy professor was murdered in that house, or sported *à la Speke* with public curiosity, or had committed some crime which rendered it advisable for him to disappear, or met his death by accident, or changed his name and went into a monastery, or ran away with some neighbour's wife—or in whatever other way we may account for it, such was the apparent end of Everhard Feith, whose name, however, will be long remembered by all lovers of Greek literature, by his learned and interesting *Antiquitatis Homerica*.

There is a tradition—it may be nothing more—which attributes the mysterious disappearance of another learned man to a very different cause. It was not final like that of Feith, but it seems to have been sudden, and for a length of time

complete. A young Oxford student, looking forward, it seems, to eminence in the church, and distinction as a theologian, vanished suddenly from amongst his friends, and the course he had taken defied at once all search and conjecture. Almost simultaneously with the departure of the Oxford scholar was the advent of a daring corsair on the Mediterranean, who swept the waves like a falcon, plundered ships of all nations, and piled up immense wealth in a small barren island, which he made his nest. Here he associated more or less freely with his followers, leaving them occasionally for the company of a lady whom he had made the partner of his wild life. When he had fulfilled the object for which he became a sea-rover, the lady having died, the rock was left untenanted, the pirates dispersed. Not long after, the student reappeared at his university, applied himself as before to study, and entering the church, gradually rose to its highest honours, and died Archbishop of York.

About the year 1812, an officer of the Preventive Service living with his wife and family at Margate, and known more or less familiarly to the whole town, went forth as his duty required to walk along the cliffs, and watch whatever appearances might present themselves on the sea. The month was November; the time of day about four in the afternoon; the weather wild and blustering; he was in the heyday of life—his frame powerful, his health perfect, his condition of mind analogous to that of his body. With double-breasted coat buttoned up to the chin, and tightly-fitting cap—with spyglass in hand, a pair of pistols in his pocket, and a heavy cutlass by his side—he moved westwards along the downs, meeting and conversing with several persons as he sauntered along. Presently the night set in darksome and drizzly, with heavy gusts from the south, which, rolling in the big waves before them, dashed them in thunder against the cliffs. Out of the darkness of that terrible night the officer never emerged: all possible search was made for him or his body, but without effect; it was suspected, and the suspicion seemed reasonable, that he had fallen over the cliffs, and been washed out to sea; his wife and children lamented him; another officer was put into his place, and by degrees his disappearance ceased to be spoken of. Thirty years later—that is, in the summer of 1842—walking with one of my children along the downs, I saw a farmer ploughing at a short distance beyond the flag-staff, and stopped to talk with him on the subject of sea-weed manure. While we were conversing, the man observed something glitter in the furrow he had just made—it was the button of a naval officer; this led to further examination—the earth was removed, and little more than a foot beneath the surface, the skeleton of a man, with several fragments of his dress, was discovered. It was ascertained that the uniform he had worn was that of the Preventive officers; and it seemed probable from various circumstances we had discovered the skeleton of the man who disappeared in 1812.

Sometimes, in moving about the world, you come in contact with one end, so to speak, of a disappearance, while you occasionally witness the phenomena which accompany the other end. While in quarantine at Malta, the plague broke out in the lazaretto three doors from my apartments, and one man, a traveller from the East, died. Scarcely was the breath out of his body ere preparations were made for his funeral: a coffin was

improvised, placed on a small bier, and four *guardiani*, dressed in black and muffled, bore him hurriedly along the esplanade under my window to his long home. I took some pains to ascertain who he was, but without success; he had given no information to any one during his terrible illness, and his luggage contained no papers which could throw any light on his name, his circumstances, or his country. All, therefore, that could be said was, that a man had disappeared from the earth, though he had doubtless friends somewhere who mourned his loss, which to them must always have remained a mystery.

Another instance, in some respects similar, I witnessed on the banks of the Nile. While moving southwards along the river, I saw on the sand close to the water the corpse of a man which had apparently just been washed ashore. That he had been murdered there could be no doubt, from the deep gash in the back of his head, where the skull had been broken in as if with an iron bar. He had been a man above the ordinary height, broad-chested, with large limbs, and athletic figure, probably about forty years of age. Two Arabs were engaged close at hand in digging a grave; for to them, as to the ancient Greeks, it is an act of piety to bury the chance dead whom they may find in their way. They judged as we did from appearances, that the body might have been eight or ten days in the water, floating downwards with the current, so that he was probably murdered high up in Middle Egypt. Wherever his home may have been, it was now desolate, and all those who had been his friends were lost in speculation respecting his destiny; all they knew was, that he had left his home on a certain day for business or pleasure, to take a walk or visit a relative; a curtain then fell on his doings and whereabouts never to be withdrawn.

Here in London, almost every day presents us with social phenomena quite as startling, though somewhat different in character. Men leave their homes to make a call upon a friend, and their absence proves eternal; young ladies run away from their families, sometimes with Frenchmen, who may be known by the trick of biting their nails; sometimes with Germans, no less remarkable for their fondness for beer; sometimes with our own gay countrymen, who often, however, desert their victims in the course of a few weeks, so that, if they think proper, they may return to their friends. In general, however, no such thought comes to them, so that an act begun perhaps in thoughtless passion, terminates in a life of shame, or in suicide. Many years ago, there happened in a family with which I am acquainted an incident belonging to the class of facts above described. A young lady, about two or three and twenty, through no motive that could be divined, except that of amatory caprice, left her father's house so suddenly and secretly, that no trace of her movements could be discovered. It was not even known whether she went away alone or in the company of a lover. Advertisements, placards, offering a large reward, were had recourse to. The father, widely known, and as widely respected, interested all his friends in prosecuting inquiries respecting the lost one, without avail. Year after year passed, and at length the truant might be almost said to be forgotten. More than forty years afterwards, a brother of the lady, though not born when she disappeared, emigrated to Australia, and,

on arriving at Sydney, had his name inserted in the journals in the list of passengers. One morning while sitting in his hotel at breakfast, he was informed that a lady below desired to speak with him. 'Shew her up,' said John Bull, rather perplexed to conjecture who could wish to see him in that new world. When his visitor entered, he saw that she was old, though still in robust health. Instead of explaining her business, she abruptly inquired whether or not he was the son of a gentleman whom she named, together with a locality in which he had resided in England. Upon being answered in the affirmative, she said: 'Then I am your sister;' and forthwith entered into a full account of her mysterious disappearance. She had not left her home alone, but with a lover inferior to her in rank, who had taken her to Australia, where he had set up a hotel, and realised a fortune. It was the affair of the hotel, however, that had withheld her from communicating with her family, who might have regarded it as a degradation to live by industry. Her husband, however, was now dead, yet the hotel still sustained its celebrity under the management of the lady, who, when she fled from her home, had not at all events fled to poverty.

A more striking example of these social phenomena is that of Agnes, daughter of James Ferguson the mechanist. While walking down the Strand with her father, she slipped her arm out of his while he was lost in thought, and he never saw her more, nor was anything known of her fate till many years after Ferguson's death. From the short hints which have been left us on the subject, it appears that a nobleman to whom she had become known at her father's lectures took her, in the first instance, to Italy, and then—but whether there or after their return to England, is not stated—deserted her, in conformity with the general rule. She then applied to Garrick, who gave her a trial on the boards, but the attempt proved a failure. Agnes next tried authorship, with no better success; after which, in despair, she threw herself upon the streets, and died miserably in Round Court, off the Strand; and it was upon her death-bed that she disclosed to the surgeon who attended her the melancholy story of her career. From the localities in which she habitually moved, she must frequently have passed her relatives in the streets, though withheld by shame from making herself known, while they imagined her to be in some distant country, or in the grave.

At Llanelly, in South Wales, a man of property and respectable position, though not a gentleman, who had married and become the father of two children, left his home suddenly without being observed by any of his neighbours, and all the inquiries made by his wife and his relatives proved unavailing. The Welsh are an affectionate and, upon the whole, a romantic people; but the deserted wife was not romantic, so, after waiting a certain number of years, in expectation of her husband's return, she listened to the wooing of another man, and married again. There was no poetry in her composition, neither was she, like Tennyson's Mrs Arden, driven to take this step by the fear of poverty for herself or her children. The truth was, the buxom Welshwoman wanted a husband, and took one, having waited long enough, as she thought, for her first lord and master to come back, if he meant to come back at all. But though the wife thus gave proof of her want of

faith in the husband of her youth, or else really believed him to be dead, the lost man had a sister much younger than himself, who, instead of sharing the wife's despair, regarded her second marriage as an act of vice, and always looked forward confidently to her brother's return. When he had been absent about eight years, however, a circumstance occurred which staggered even her confidence. A man in sailor's garb called upon her, and related that he had brought a message from her dead brother—for that he was dead he made no doubt at all. The ship in which they had been together in the Pacific went to pieces on a coral-reef, and all hands, he said, perished except himself. His life was saved by the accidental passage of a whaler, the crew of which, discerning a man upon the reef, lowered a boat, and took him on board. During the five years which had elapsed since that event, he had been a wanderer in America and elsewhere; and in obedience to the locomotive instinct, he soon resumed the habits of his former life, and disappeared from Llanelly. This story soothed the wife's conscience, and somewhat softened the asperity with which the female critics of the town spoke of her second nuptials.

Years again rolled on, and the missing John Williams was not only given up as a lost man, but almost forgotten. All who are familiar with the habits of the Welsh people know that in small towns and country villages they are in the habit, when they go out, of leaving their doors on the latch, locks and keys being thought almost superfluous. One fine day, towards the close of summer, when Mrs Williams, now Mrs Williams no longer, had gone forth with her husband and the two children (she had none by her second marriage) to enjoy a walk in the neighbouring fields, John suddenly made his *avatar* at Llanelly, and, going straight to his own house, lifted the latch, hung his hat on a peg in the passage, and then, finding no one at home, went and sat on a window-seat, whence he could command a view down the street, to watch for his wife. After a short time, he saw her and his two children coming towards the house in familiar conversation with a man, whom, however, he had known from a boy. He sprang from his seat, and ran to the door to meet them. A romance-writer might make something of the situation, and I leave it to the romance-writer. When Mrs Williams saw her first husband emerging from the door, she forgot her second, and, bounding forward, threw herself, with a burst of tears, into his arms, while honest Griffiths looked on in astonishment and wonder. The circumstances of their position were soon explained, and the question now was, who should have the wife? The matter was settled in this way: the men stood on either side of the woman, and it was agreed that to whomsoever she should turn and give her hand, he should remain master of the situation. She decided in favour of Williams—the old love, though eclipsed for a while, remaining still the stronger in her heart. This appears to be the story upon which Mr Tennyson has based his poetical legend of *Enoch Arden*.

An anecdote related not long ago in the *Times* may be cited to prove, if any proof were needed, that women do not always shew themselves unworthy of a man's faithful love. In a village in Somersetshire, two lovers, possessing no means on which to live, agreed to separate; the man asking the woman to wait for him a certain number of

years, after which she would be free, if she thought proper, to marry another man. She affirmed, however, that she would wait for him till death; and he went abroad. Several years later, a gentleman returning by train from London to Taunton had a companion in the carriage whose complexion and manner excited his curiosity. He was swarthy and sunburned, in the full vigour of manhood and strength, but excited and uneasy, with a wandering eye and twitching features, especially when they entered Somersetshire. At length he found it impossible to preserve silence, and asked the gentleman if he knew a certain village near Taunton.

'I live there,' was the reply, 'and am just returning to it from town.'

'Then,' said the young man, with difficulty restraining his emotion, 'do you know such a one?'—mentioning a young woman's name.

'Yes—perfectly well.'

'Is she'—— And he could get no further.

'Married, you would ask,' said the gentleman. 'No; she is waiting for her lover, who is gone abroad.'

'That's me!' exclaimed the man with enthusiasm. 'Thank God, she has waited, for I am come back to marry her.'

The sequel may be left to conjecture.

A friend of mine living with his wife at a seaport town, had made the acquaintance of a gentleman in the neighbourhood about his own age, and so like him in feature and figure that one might at any time be mistaken for the other. The resemblance was, in fact, so complete, that when the men stood side by side, it was difficult to determine in what point the likeness failed. Of this curious circumstance the country gentleman took advantage after the following manner. Calling upon my friend one Friday evening, he said he wished him, in the course of the following day, to take a passport for himself from the French consul, and then hand it over to him. 'I want to astonish the folks here,' he said, 'but could not do so if I took the passport myself and in my own name.' Suspecting nothing wrong, my friend did as he was requested; the fabricator of astonishment on that same evening passed over into France, and in the course of a few days his reasons for disappearing came to light—he had committed forgery to an immense amount, and his disappearance from England was final. After crossing the Channel, no one knew in what direction he travelled, what name he assumed, to what country or manner of life he betook himself. He had friends, many friends who loved him dearly in spite of his transgressions; but they went on, living from youth to age, without obtaining the slightest hint of what had befallen their relative, who may still be doing penance on the banks of the Ohio or the Susquehanna for the wrong he perpetrated in youth.

It is well known that in France, before the Revolution, the vanishing of men almost before the eyes of their friends was so common that it scarcely excited any surprise at all. The only inquiry was, had he a beautiful wife or daughter, for in that case the explanation was easy; some one who had influence with the government had designs upon the lady, and made interest to have her natural guardian put out of the way while those designs were being fulfilled. A *lettre de cachet* effected the purpose in view for any number of months or years, or, if necessary, for life; and

the individual thus spirited away, should his concealment be transient, was generally careful to treat the affair as a jest, lest his fate should be made to resemble that of the great state-prisoner, a part of whose adventures are well known, though his identity has never been ascertained, for the conjectures of Lord Dover and others carry with them their own refutation.

Russia is still what France, and still more Italy, were formerly, the land of mystery; that is, for the words are generally synonymous—of crime.

SIMONY.

SIMONY is so called from the sin of Simon Magus, who offered the apostles money in consideration of their conferring upon him the gift of the Holy Ghost. 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money,' said the apostle Peter in reply. Such in effect has been the answer supposed to be given by the church since St Peter's time, when any one has been so hardy as to talk about buying a benefice, a living, a cure of souls, or by whatever other name ecclesiastical preferment is called. It would have been more in accordance with the circumstances of the prototype of this offence, had simony been confined to the case of giving money for admission to holy orders, but the meaning has been extended till it has included also the case of buying the right of next presentation to a living, that living being actually vacant at the time of purchase.

It is much to be feared that the expounders of the law of simony have swallowed a camel while they strained at a gnat, and that the camel having proved to be exceedingly indigestible, has caused its devourers to present a grotesque, not to say ludicrous appearance. Some might even say that if simony, as now signified, be an offence against the Holy Ghost, the law against it is but a system of trifling with holy things, a something akin to the law which said that if a man swore by the Temple it was nothing, but if he swore by the altar, sanctified by the Temple, he was a debtor to his oath, and must carry it through.

The exact meaning of simony, in its modern interpretation, is the offence of corruptly giving the patron of an ecclesiastical living money, in order that he may present a clerk to the benefice. This is the general signification of it; the more confined and the more practical meaning will be made apparent in the course of this article.

Until the head of the state became also head of the church, simony was not an offence either at common law or by the statute law. The clergy had not the disposal of all the church patronage, though the largest portion of it was doubtless in their hands; but the church had the power to supervise the manner in which patronage was bestowed, and to take cognizance of all irregularities, simoniacal or otherwise, committed by patrons, cleric or lay, or by the presentees. As a proof that the clergy did not hold all the patronage, it may be mentioned that it was a case in which a lay patron was concerned that brought about the first decided quarrel between Henry I. and Thomas à Becket. William de Eynsford was a military tenant of the crown, and also the owner of an advowson. The archbishop presented a priest to the living, who was forthwith ejected by De Eynsford. De Eynsford was excommunicated for the

offence, and remained in that 'parlous state' till à Becket, at the instance of the king, coupled with repeated threats, agreed to absolve him. But though in some cases there were lay patrons who could present, it was always necessary, in accordance with the spirit of feudal institutions, that the bishop of the diocese should receive homage from the presentee, so that in effect there was a sort of ecclesiastical supremacy even in cases where laymen were concerned. By virtue of this supremacy, the ecclesiastical courts had jurisdiction to try questions affecting the right and manner of presentation; the civil courts took no notice of such matters, but referred them to the spiritual courts. If, therefore, a case arose in which, for a money consideration, a priest obtained the grant of a living, it was conned in the bishop's court, and the sentence on the guilty consisted accordingly of ecclesiastical censures—deprivation for the presentee, forfeiture of right to present, for the patron, with penance more or less severe superadded.

There was plenty of employment for the ecclesiastical courts, had they chosen to inquire into every case of imputed simony. In England, the offence was not perhaps at any time a very common one; but on the continent, and especially in Italy, the practice was all but universal. The grossest cases presented themselves. Sometimes a virtuous fit came upon everybody, and it was agreed to make examples. According to Muratori, there was a Marquis of Tuscany, in the year 1046, who submitted to be flogged by an abbot on the steps of the altar, for having been guilty of the offence of simony. But these were only so many fair shows in the flesh. Simony, as a matter of fact, continued to be practised among all grades of clergy, from the highest to the lowest: the sum paid by a poor man, in order to be put 'into one of the priest's offices,' was but a small tithe of the sums paid by bishops; while it is known that the money lavished in order to secure the next presentation to the papal chair was so large a sum as to impoverish even a Wolsey. It is true that corruption and the sale of appointments took place in other departments of government besides the church, but in them the thing was called by its right name, bribery, and was—in England, at least—punished with the lash of the law. Under another name, the same thing was done in matters which were deemed more important, because more sacred; and the punishment, especially if money could be advantageously placed, was often quite disproportionate to that provided in civil cases, and also to the offence itself. There is in a Wycliffite attack on the friars, contained in a rough metrical composition, called *Jack Uplande*, and written in 1401, so good an illustration of the true meaning of the word simony, that the passage in which it occurs is given here. The writer asks the friar:

Freer, when thou receivest a penie
For to say a masse,
Whether sellest thou Gods bodie for that penie,
Or thy praiser, or ells thy travell?

He then satirises the idea as to the price of the prayer and the labour, and coming to his first question, says:

And if thou sellest Gods bodie, other thy prayer,
Then it is very *simonie*,
And art become a chapman worse than Judas,
That sold it for thirtie pence.

Ecclesiastical censures formed the sole punishment

for simony until the time when the sovereign became the head of the church, and offences of this kind were dealt with as injuries against men rather than as supposed injuries against God. But laws had to be made to meet the case, for the common law knew nothing of it.

The first law was the 31st Elizabeth, c. 6, by which it was enacted, that if any person, for any sum of money or reward, or promise of money or reward, shall present any other person to any ecclesiastical benefice or dignity, both the giver and receiver shall forfeit two years' value of the benefice or dignity, half to go to the king, and half to the informer: the presentee shall be for ever incapable of enjoying the benefice, to which, for that turn, the crown shall present. Order was also taken against corrupt agreements to resign or to exchange.

It was decided upon the cases which arose out of this statute that it was an act of simony to buy the presentation to a living actually vacant at the time of the purchase, but that it was not simony to buy the next presentation to a living that was occupied. The distinction was rather a fine one, perhaps, and certain clergymen took advantage of it to prove that they, at all events, were as wise as the children of this world. They might not buy a vacant living, because to do so was as bad as the act of Simon Magus; to buy the next innings, though the incumbent had but a few hours' breath in his body, was considered to render them not unworthy successors of Simon Peter. So they purchased next presentations, and when vacancies occurred, presented themselves; managing, in this way, to cheat their consciences as well as the spirit of the law.

Queen Anne passed a law which was intended to put a stop to this practice. Perhaps it was meant to put a stop to the possibility of a clergyman buying an interest in a church-living by any means and under any circumstances; but if so, it fell short of the mark, and only made the law have an appearance of kinship with that which strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. Queen Anne's law made it simony for any one to purchase, directly or indirectly, in his own name, or in the name of another, the next presentation to any living, whether occupied or not, and to present himself on the vacancy occurring. A layman, however, might still do as he liked, according to the statute of Elizabeth.

The principle has been laid down, professedly in the spirit of these laws, which would seem, however, to be set at nought by it, that to buy the advowson of a living, that is, the perpetual right to present, is not simony, though the purchaser be a clerk, and though the living be vacant at the time of purchase. For decency's sake, it has been declared, as a rider to this, that if the living be vacant at the time the advowson is bought, the right to the next presentation does not pass with the sale. There is nothing, however, to prevent a clerk, who has the advowson, presenting himself to the living; a reservation made in the interest of landed property, to which so many principles have been sacrificed.

A great case arose when Lord Eldon was Lord Chancellor, in which the principles of the whole law respecting simony were reviewed and discussed. A clergyman, the incumbent of a living, was on his death-bed, and the owner of the advowson being aware of the fact, agreed with a layman for the right to the next presentation. Afraid,

apparently, of the statute of Elizabeth against the sale of vacant livings, the two contractors agreed for the sale of the advowson, but a clause was inserted to provide for the reconveyance of the advowson as soon as one presentation had been made to the living. The deed by which this agreement was secured was made only a few hours before the incumbent died. The purchaser of the advowson presented a clergyman who knew nothing of the circumstances under which the right was acquired; the bishop of the diocese refused to induct him, and the matter came before the Court of Queen's Bench. It was admitted that the clergyman knew nothing about the purchase; but the question was, whether, the agreement for the purchase having been made at a time when the living was practically vacant, it was not a simoniacal agreement, and void, therefore, in every particular. The Court of Queen's Bench thought that it was so; but the House of Lords, under the presidency of Lord Eldon, overruled their decision, and decided that there not having been any corrupt agreement on the part of the clerk, the lay buyer of the right to present had not overstepped the law of Elizabeth, though his agreement was made when he knew the incumbent could not possibly survive many hours. Whatever moral guilt there may be in buying the next presentation to a vacant living, would attach, one would think, to a case like the above; but the highest court in England has decided unanimously that, under such circumstances, 'simony is fair-play.'

There is another branch of ecclesiastical discipline and law which allows of a man standing with one foot in simony, but forbids him to draw in the other. *Resignation Bonds*, as they are called, are documents by which a clergyman binds himself, in consideration of being presented to a living, to resign the same at the bidding of the patron, and by his bond he agrees to forfeit a penal sum in the event of his failing to surrender. These agreements were at first looked upon as of doubtful character, but were afterwards allowed in cases where the patron of the living wished to provide for a son who was not yet of age, the ground of the permission being, that a father is bound by nature to provide for his son, and therefore there is no corrupt aim in his stipulation with the clerk who agrees to be his tenant-at-will.

In time, these resignation bonds became general, in favour of anybody, and the temporary incumbent was liable to be turned out whenever the patron had secured a good price for the next presentation. Resistance was made to them, both on the ground of their simoniacal character, and of the loss of dignity they occasioned to the office of the clergy. They were finally, after a long struggle, declared to be illegal, by a judgment which also made questionable the validity of special resignation bonds in favour of the relatives of the patron. The law, however, as now settled, allows special resignation bonds and contracts, provided they be made in favour of one, or one of two persons standing in the relation, whether by blood or marriage, of uncle, son, grandson, brother, nephew, or grand-nephew to the patron. The reason for this is the same as was originally given for authorising special resignation bonds—namely, that a man is bound to provide for his own kith and kin, who are not supposed to pay him anything for doing so. If they paid him, no matter how rich they, or how poor he, might be, their contract would not only

be void in law, and they themselves liable to punishment, but they would be likened by the respectable Pharisees of the period to the man who offered money to the apostle for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and received for answer: 'Thy money perish with thee.'

THE MYSTERY OF PEGWELL PLACE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

I COULD repeat, even now, at this distance of time, with unfailling accuracy, every sentence of the conversation to which I listened, while the night wore on, and while my agitation was momentarily increased by the fear that the swift-coming light of dawn might find me still in my hazardous position. Several times I had to rise from my knees, and withdraw softly into the complete shade of the wall of the house, when slow, heavy steps coming along Pegwell Place threatened an inspection by the not too vigilant policeman, whose 'beat' included that peaceful locality. I was also distracted by the fear that my mother might possibly discover my absence from the house, and be alarmed. This was not likely; she invariably did what I asked her, and I had asked her to go to bed, and to make Hannah do the same, as I should certainly be late. But fear is never reasonable, and so this apprehension came to torment me also. I have not forgotten one physical or mental sensation which I experienced during the time I knelt by the wall of No. 8, and listened through the open space in the window. I could, as I have already said, repeat every sentence of the conversation which I heard on that memorable occasion, but it is unnecessary; the steps which I took in consequence of the unconscious revelation are alone essential to the narrative of my adventure in Pegwell Place.

I did not attempt to move from my place until the man and the boy had left the sitting-room together. I drew myself back from the angle of the wall, and crouched in the deep shade, as one of them approached the window, and shut it closely down, drew up the blind, and closed and barred the shutters. With the extinction of the light, a curious sense of desolation and unreality came over me: the stillness—the chill of coming dawn—the blind, blank aspect of the shut-up house—the sudden relaxation from the intensity of listening—the sudden check to the strong excitement which had gone before—all these things combined to make the whole scene appear dreamlike and unreal. I waited, drawn close against the wall, for many minutes, until I thought all risk of being observed from one of the upper windows was at an end; and during those minutes terrible fatigue and lassitude came upon me, and the scene I had witnessed began to seem impossible, an hallucination. When it was safe to move, I crept softly down to the gate—I remembered it had been, or had seemed to be, locked the first time Adolphe Bonhard had approached it; how strange an accident that it should be unlocked on this, of all nights!—keeping close by the paling, to whose inconsiderable nature as a barrier against the foreign folk my mother had objected. I reached the gate, opened it, opened the gate of No. 9, and gained my own house-door, unnoticed, in perfect safety. Not a step intruded on the stillness of Pegwell Place, not a presence interrupted its empty solitude.

I awoke, after an ineffectual attempt to sleep, at my usual hour, and met my mother with a degree of composure which I was far from feeling, and an appearance of interest in the little events of yesterday which was anything but genuine.

While we were at breakfast my mother said: 'They're going to have company at No. 8—the Madame's niece, at least her nephew's widow—she isn't French. Mrs Corner told Hannah she is coming—to try and recover her spirits, I suppose, poor thing. And Susan, only think, Hannah says she is certain the Madame wants to keep her son out of his cousin's way—she is his cousin by marriage, you know, and a young widow is very bad company for any man.'

'But how does Hannah know anything about Madame Bonhard's feelings and intentions, mother, dear?' I asked, very anxious all the time to collect every particle of attainable information concerning the dwellers at No. 8.

'I'm sure I can't tell, Susan; but she is quite confident about it in her own mind, and I really do think servants always do know everything of the kind, and are more often right than wrong. You see it amuses them to watch and find out things, and they are not above it, as we are.'

I did not feel particularly certain that 'we' merited this distinction, either generally or in that particular instance, but I said nothing, and my mother continued.

'Hannah is sure about it, because the Madame is sending her son away before the young person comes. She thinks by this she must be pretty. It seems likely, poor dear, and I'm sure I hope she may marry well, and keep clear of foreigners this time; I daresay she has seen her folly, and is ready to thank God for her escape, though'—and here my mother remembered her Christian principles—it is not right, of course, to think any one's death a blessing, particularly when you didn't know him, or to be quite sure any one was bad, even a Frenchman.'

I nodded assent to this sound, and certainly not exaggerated doctrine of charity, and went on to question my mother concerning the extent of Hannah's information.

'Then this young lady—I suppose they don't know, or cannot pronounce her name—is going to remain for some time at Madame Bonhard's?' This supposition clashed with all I knew, and all I expected.

'I don't suppose Mrs Corner exactly *knows*,' replied my mother, 'but she thinks it likely, or why should the son be sent away?'

Then I perceived that they knew nothing positive in the matter, but Hannah, having her theory of Madame Bonhard's wisest and most probable course under the circumstances, had invested it with all the authority of fact. I let the subject drop, made my customary arrangements for the day, and took leave of my mother earlier than usual, on the plea of a promised visit to Fanny Robertson, before the hour for commencing my lessons at a 'Ladies' College' at Bayswater, which I attended. My portfolio contained that morning, in addition to the usual sketches and materials incident to my day's work, the portrait I had idly sketched of Madame Bonhard, and an equally accurate likeness of M. Adolphe. I had a further opportunity of satisfying myself that I had succeeded in producing a true resemblance to the handsome and graceful young man, in a minute

after I left the house. For he was there, in the garden, seated as usual on a camp-stool, close to the little green porch, and, also as usual, smoking a thin cigar. To-day he had a suspicious-looking, flat, long, wide, yellow-covered, thin book in his hand, instead of the limp newspaper; a class of literature of which Pegwell Place, had it been sufficiently *au fait* of such things to recognise its nature, would have especially disapproved. His arm was enclosed in the shiny black apparatus as usual, and he rose and made me the accustomed bow. I looked at him, at his handsome glowing face, at the restless blue eyes and the slight feminine hands, and I felt that I shrunk from him and shuddered. I glanced towards No. 8. Marie, in her usual servant's dress, was laying down the mat inside the door, and I could just perceive the outline of Madame Bonhard's tall figure seated in the arm-chair close to the window.

M. Camille d'Herlan lived in bachelor 'chambers' in Piccadilly, and it was with a little trepidation, and an unpleasantly present and pressing consciousness that I was grievously offending against all the laws which governed society at Pegwell Place, that I drove to the said chambers, and sent in the most alarming message which I could devise calculated to bring M. Camille d'Herlan down to the cab with the least possible delay. As soon as he made his appearance, in a thoroughly French state of fuss and excitement, I told him there was nothing wrong with Fanny, but that I had to make an important communication to him, and he must get into the cab with me, and accompany me to the Ladies' College. I spoke very impressively, and I know that I looked very pale, and very much in earnest. M. d'Herlan did not hesitate for an instant. He ran up-stairs to fetch his hat and gloves, and in a few moments we were driving towards Bayswater, and I had commenced my narrative, with a question which made him regard me with undisguised amazement.

'M. d'Herlan,' I said, 'my business with you refers to a conversation on political matters, connected with the French government, which we had a few weeks ago. Do you remember it? Do you remember what you told me about Gaston d'Aulnoy?'

'Of course I remember it—I remember it perfectly—but, in the name of Heaven, what can you know of him?'

'Nothing, it may be; but I am disposed to believe a great deal, much that will astonish you, and out of which you may find good to come for yourself.' As I spoke, I untied the strings of my portfolio, and took from it a sheet of Bristol board.

'You know this man's appearance, M. d'Herlan?'

'Certainly,' he replied—'that is, I think I do; but I have told you of his wonderful power of disguise, and I could not undertake to be quite sure. I have seen him several times, but I cannot be certain that on any of these occasions I saw the man as he really is.'

'Did you ever see him looking like that?' I asked, as I put the sketch I had made of Madame Bonhard into M. d'Herlan's hand.

He looked at it intently, with a puzzled expression at first, but then his face cleared, and he said emphatically: 'Never; I have never seen him look like this woman.'

'Has he a mole upon the left cheek?' I asked.

'Yes; a mole which rises in the centre, and is difficult to point out, because the flatness of the

surface will not bear close inspection—the kind of inspection our police make, but which no one else could venture on.’

‘Is it of the size and colour of the mark you see there?’

M. d’Herlan again looked closely at the sketch, and answered: ‘It must be, I should think, but I have only heard of it, never seen it. The mole was hidden somehow whenever I have seen D’Aulnoy. But what is all this, Miss Miller? Do you believe this to be a likeness of the man? Do you believe he is disguised as a woman?’

‘I do, M. d’Herlan. I believe this to be an exact likeness of Gaston d’Aulnoy as he is at this moment, engaged in bringing to perfection a more deadly and more promising scheme than any he has yet devised, and I believe I could bring you into his presence at no greater distance, and with no more trouble than taking you to my mother’s house would involve.’

‘Good heavens!’ exclaimed M. Camille, wildly excited; ‘tell me all. Miss Miller, don’t delay, don’t delay.’

‘Only for one moment longer,’ I said. ‘Look at this card, and tell me, have you ever seen Gaston d’Aulnoy look like this?’ Then I handed him a small but very carefully drawn head, which I had executed immediately after I had arisen that morning. The face was the face in Madame Bonhard’s portrait, but the inimitable French cap to which it had owed much of its air of perfect matronly dignity and grave repose was wanting, the long lace lappets were not there, no close lace frill stood up around the long throat. The gray hair, cut closely, was visible, and the head had its true character of masculine vigour and sternness. This drawing was in profile of the right side of the face, and the mole did not appear.

‘Yes,’ said M. d’Herlan, ‘I have seen Gaston d’Aulnoy look like this; this is certainly the portrait of the man as I have seen him.’

‘Then you have seen him as he is,’ I said, as I replaced both portraits in the portfolio. ‘You and I have seen the true D’Aulnoy. I have never heard him called by that name, but I know him now. Listen to me with all your brain as well as all your ears, M. d’Herlan, while I tell you how I came to have the opportunity of taking that portrait.’

The effect produced upon M. d’Herlan by my narrative was overwhelming. It was barely completed in outline when I had reached my destination, and the necessity for attending to my business was irksome in the last degree to me, and to him desperately irritating. But there was no help for it, and the only thing I could do was to desire him to go to Kensington Gardens, and wait there for me. ‘In the meantime, turn the circumstances over in your mind,’ I said, ‘and endeavour to strike out some plan of immediate and effectual action; but remember this, I will not be a party to any which does not secure the safety of the boy. He is D’Aulnoy’s victim, an enthusiast, fast being driven into monomania, and he must be saved from danger and punishment in France, and from vengeance here.’

The succeeding hour was one of the longest in my life. If I had been in love with the fascinating Frenchman, as desperately and as determinedly as Fanny herself, I am sure my impatience to rejoin him could not have been greater, and I doubt whether he ever more ardently longed for the

beatific vision of his pretty *fiancée* than for the appearance of my sober and unlovely self. I could not help smiling once or twice, in the midst of all my real agitation and perplexity—by which the juvenile art-students under my charge profited largely, their rickety walls and tumble-down trees escaping with complete impunity—at the notion that I, Susan Miller, a tranquil and contented dweller in Pegwell Place, was actually cognizant of an important political secret, and actually had an assignation with a young man in Kensington Gardens.

The drawing lesson was got through somehow, and I rejoined M. Camille. It fortunately happened that I had a clear hour at my disposal before I had to attend one of the pupils secured to me by M. de Beaucour’s influence, and my afternoon engagements were at my own home. Before this hour had elapsed, M. Camille and I had determined on our plan of action. There was one point in this matter on which I was ignorant, and it was an essential one. When was the attempt to be made? I had heard the place and the manner discussed; I had learned that a few persons, some of them attached to the personal service of the illustrious intended victim, and therefore doubly detestable traitors, were cognizant of the design, and its imminent nearness; but I had heard no names mentioned, nor do I think, in the excitement of the time, I could have charged my memory with them in any case. I knew that the scheme was as perfect as the utmost skill, coolness, daring, and devotion could render it. But the time was doubtful, and it was of the utmost importance that there should be no uncertainty on that point. The scene which I had witnessed was evidently the full-dress rehearsal of Adolphe’s fatal rôle. Nothing could have been more admirable than the device which was to send the wretched boy into France in the dress of a widow. A young woman, otherwise attired, travelling alone, and possessed of the remarkable personal beauty which in this instance no disguise could conceal, would indubitably have been the object of notice of an injurious kind. But the privilege as well as the penalty of solitude attaches to the sad estate of widowhood, and the garb secures respect and compassion. The gentle young widow need not dread rude notice, and might calculate on having her way made tolerably easy to any place or object she might desire to attain. Her luggage would not be scrutinised with unpleasant exactness; what could it contain but duplicates and adjuncts of that mournful garb? The crumpled letters, with broad black-bordered envelopes, addressed to her in scrawling feminine hands, which I had seen, and whose contents I had heard discussed with cool revolting cynicism, would surely pass unsuspected among the scattered sentimental notes, faded flowers, and extracts from poems of a consoling tendency, heaped, with artistic disorder, into the remarkably ladylike travelling-desk which had been produced during the interview between the conspirator and his tool.

Horrible as it all was, it was impossible to deny a tribute of involuntary admiration to the skill of the device.

‘Did you see the weapon?’ M. Camille asked me. And I told him yes, I had seen it. A dainty death-dealing thing, a beautifully finished pocket revolver, which Adolphe had held out poised in his slender womanish hand, his eyes sparkling, and his red lips parted in a wild smile. I did not tell

M. d'Herlan what a cold thrill of fear had run through me, as I thought how, if I made the least sound which should betray me, and reveal my discovery, one motion of that womanish hand would surely kill me.

The communication made by Mrs Corner to Hannah, unreliable as it was, seemed to indicate that the design was not to be put in immediate operation. Madame Bonhard's son, the young man whose arm all the neighbours had known to be broken, and had seen in its complicated bandages, was to go away. His absence was to be known, understood, and doubtless talked of, before the arrival of Madame Bonhard's widowed niece. She would come, and her appearance and manners would be known and discussed, and then the question was, how long was she to remain with her aunt, and how should we ascertain the intended day, hour, and route of her departure. No answer to these questions was immediately attainable; we were forced to agree that waiting and the closest watching were our only resources, and I undertook to do the watching on the premises. It was further agreed that when M. Camille made his customary visit to Fanny that afternoon, he should prepare her for the probability of his having to go to Paris for a day or two. She would not mind it much, if he only laid sufficient emphasis on the excruciating misery of parting, and the unspeakable rapture of meeting again, and if he asked her for many and minute particulars concerning such 'things' as she might desire to have brought her from Paris. I strongly counselled M. Camille to keep the real cause of his journey a profound secret from Fanny. I reminded him of what she had said, when vaguely speculating upon the possibility of that taking place which had now really occurred, and of the necessity for caution and discretion which her excitement and enthusiasm would inevitably disconcert. 'I am no judge,' I said, 'and I speak under correction as a person knowing absolutely nothing of the world; but I have a certain conviction that if you desire to derive all the personal good out of this business which may accrue to you, the best way to insure it will be *always* maintaining inviolable silence about it to every one. Naturally, the best rewarded services are those which are secret. If you would have pudding, don't try for praise.'

It was homely counsel, but sound, and M. Camille seemed struck and convinced by it. When we parted, a certain line of action had been adopted, the first step in which involved my writing a long letter to M. de Beaucour. This letter I wrote when my afternoon pupils had left me, and posted with my own hands. As I returned from the post-office, which was quite near, a cab, laden with luggage, passed me, and I received the last parting salute from M. Adolphe Bonhard, who was seated in solitary state inside.

'Well, my dear,' said my mother, who met me at the door, 'he's gone, so unexpected; Hannah says they did not think he would be off so soon. I'm sorry you weren't here, Susan, to see how Bonne took on about it. She went to the gate with him, and she cried really like anything, and was quite in a terrible taking. I don't think the Madame herself can be much worse. It really makes one think better of those unfortunate foreigners almost as if they had some heart after all.'

'But where is he going, and for how long,' I said, 'that they make this fuss about him?'

'Ah, that I don't know, my dear,' replied my mother. 'Hannah can't ask Bonne, you know, because she, poor creature, can't speak anything but French; but I'm sure Mr Coxe will be able to tell us, for I know he called there this morning when you were out. Dear, dear! what a finikin man he is to be sure: he picked up the dead leaves off the garden-path, and threw them over the paling, just as if they were his own litter and not No. 8's.'

I thought it likely Mr Coxe would come that evening to take his share of the old-established tea and tea-cakes, but he did not make his appearance, and No. 8 made no sign. The door remained closely shut, the blinds were closely drawn, and the whole of last night's revelation might have been the most baseless of dreams for any trace of it which remained to-day.

CONCLUSION.

The first event for which I had to wait and watch was the arrival of Madame Bonhard's niece; the second, that of M. de Beaucour's letter, which was to be addressed to me at the neighbouring post-office. This precaution prevented any questioning at home, and did not excite any at the post-office, for many of my business letters were addressed there. The latter event was the first to occur; in only a day more than return of post I heard from my friend. He wrote cautiously, but said if I were indeed right in all my suppositions, and could carry out the plan of action which I had announced to him as resolved upon, I might rely upon the gratitude of the august personage to whom, in that case, I should render so signal a service, and upon the observance of the condition I had named. 'If you succeed in enabling us to prevent the crime, there will be no punishment involved, and the most absolute secrecy may be maintained as to its ever having been contemplated.' M. de Beaucour was pleased to add some very complimentary expressions regarding what he termed my 'disinterestedness' in asking nothing for myself, but making M. Camille d'Herlan's advancement in the diplomatic service the condition and guerdon of what I intended to do. Lord bless the good man! I suppose, like all men, he was unable to realise a state of mind in which ambition had no place, and contentment reigned. I did not want anything for myself or my mother, and I had no one besides to care about. I earned as much money as we required, and I was perfectly satisfied with my position in life, not distinguished certainly, but quite independent. There was just one thing which M. de Beaucour might, under the present and likely-to-arise circumstances, do for me, and that I had asked him, and he had promised to do. He did not understand me, but I perfectly understood myself, and that sufficed.

When I had read M. de Beaucour's letter, I began to be rather impatient for the further development of affairs at No. 8. It had been agreed between M. d'Herlan and myself that he was not to come to Pegwell Place. He might have been unable to recognise Gaston d'Aulnoy had he seen him in the character of Madame Bonhard, but the natural and acquired shrewdness of the conspirator's character would have been awakened in an instant by the discovery, which the merest accident might have enabled him to make, that there was communication between any dweller in Pegwell Place and an individual to whom he

was known and antagonistic. The least alteration in his plans might remove him at once and for ever from our sphere of observation and power of action. M. d'Herlan was more impatient than I was, which was quite natural, though he had no notion of the stipulation I had made with M. de Beaucour. I began to think that gentleman had not overrated M. d'Herlan, and that I had perhaps a little underrated him, when I found he had scrupulously observed my counsel, and that Fanny, a clever little damsel in her way, not devoid of curiosity, and so devoted to her Camille that the quality was particularly unlikely to lie dormant in any case pertaining to him, had not the least notion that anything unusual or mysterious was in progress. She was enjoying her convalescence, and all the innocent dignity and fluttering delight of her condition as a bride-elect, after a pretty fashion, peculiarly and charmingly her own.

Three days elapsed unmarked by any event more interesting than a visit from Eliza M'Ardle, who was intensely wrathful at the news of our minister's intended union with the widow of a lately deceased and wealthy member of the 'connection.' She said she regarded the occurrence as sinful and disgusting, and for her part she could not understand the connection 'putting up with such mammon-worship and inconsistency.' My dear mother, by no means a satirical person, has a quiet way sometimes of saying things which disconcert the hearers excessively. She disconcerted Eliza M'Ardle on the present occasion by observing: 'I think you must be mistaken, my dear. Mrs Unwin is quite young and very pretty, and our dear minister, or indeed any man, for the matter of that, might very well marry her for love; though indeed the money is a very good thing too; it helps out the love and makes it last wonderfully.'

On the morning of the fourth day, Hannah had news for us at breakfast-time of the arrival of Madame Bonhard's niece. She had come early in the morning, which was wet, a dull September day, of the soppy kind, when one knows the leaves will be soddened, and their decay will begin.

'I see her plain,' said Hannah. 'She come when I was taking in the milk, and the boy he give a hand to her box off the cab—it weren't heavy, though large, just like them as come with the Madame.'

'Oh, you saw her, did you, Hannah?' said I, breaking my customary rule of never encouraging Hannah's gossiping familiarity by questions. 'Is she young and pretty?'

'I don't know much about prettiness,' replied Hannah with some acerbity; 'looks is to some people's tastes when they ain't to others. I don't say but she's good-looking, but for my own part I don't hold with such very black hair and eyebrows.'

So the young widow had black hair and eyebrows; the last touch of disguise had been added after the full-dress rehearsal at which I had assisted. I should require to alter the portrait in M. Camille d'Herlan's possession. I knew I should find him in attendance on Fanny Robertson during the afternoon, and I went to Bayswater, and, as I had expected, I found him there. Unheard by any one, I told him briefly what I had learned. Unseen by any one, he gave me the likeness which he carried about him. I was disengaged on that afternoon, and I took up my position, busy with some needle-work, in the little green porch, whence I could communicate with my mother through the open

door, and could not fail to observe any entrances or exits at No. 8. I had not been long at my post of observation when Madame Bonhard appeared, attired precisely as I had seen her when she arrived at No. 8, in the large black shawl which shrouded from view the vigorous frame, and the bonnet which shaded the stern and thoughtful face. She leaned on the arm of her pretended niece, and I thought her assumption of feebleness was less successful than before, but that may have been, and probably was, because I had found her out. I did not require to look long at her companion; a very slight observation enabled me to carry away in my memory the effect of the change in the colour of Adolphe Bonhard's chestnut hair, eyebrows, and eyelashes. A very little trouble would make the necessary alteration in the portrait, which was to be restored to M. Camille d'Herlan in the morning. I felt rather curious, and I cannot say calmly so, to know whether Madame Bonhard would direct her steps towards the side of her little garden which adjoined ours, in which case she could hardly avoid acknowledging my presence by at least a salutation. For some time she and her companion, gravely followed at a little distance by the sleek black cat, who was adorned with a red collar and a tiny silver bell, paced up and down the opposite side of the garden. Adolphe's disguise was admirable—the gait, the carriage of the head, the dexterous sweep of the long, lugubrious skirt; but I noticed, and smiled all to myself as I did so, that he occasionally stretched the right arm straight out (Madame Bonhard was leaning on the left), and shook the closed hand with a gesture not in the least feminine, but very expressive of the pleasure and relief of being emancipated from the apparatus which had encumbered them.

I had not looked up from my work for some minutes, when suddenly doing so, I saw the two crossing before the house, and walking over to the paling. The next moment I found myself courteously addressed by Madame Bonhard, standing close to the slender barrier, and leaning with ostentatious feebleness on her niece. It is fortunate for me that when I change colour, the change is to a paler tinge; for if I had reddened now, the wild keen blue eyes fixed upon me would certainly have detected the existence of some cause of painful emotion connected with the speaker. My eyes grew a little dim, and my knees a little weak, as I rose and replied to Madame Bonhard.

'I have not had the pleasure of seeing you for some time, Miss Miller,' said she, 'I am such an invalid; I hope your mother is well?'

'Quite well, thank you,' I replied; 'I am glad to see you able to enjoy even such restricted air and exercise.'

'Yes,' she said, 'I am better, and my niece induces me to this exertion—Madame Lefebvre, Miss Miller.' We exchanged bows, and the younger lady had much the advantage in grace and self-possession. 'What beautiful order your garden is in! Nothing like it, next to Mr Cox's, in the Place. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you soon, Miss Miller.'

'I hope so, Madame. My time is much occupied, but I hope to call on you and Madame Lefebvre soon.' And then, after a steady and sustained look at me, which I flatter myself I bore very well, the conspirators turned away, taking a polite leave, and re-entered No. 8. I had the

satisfaction of perceiving that if any dim suspicion that I might possibly have penetrated the secret of the broken arm had presented itself to M. Adolphe Bonhard, not the slightest remains of it troubled the repose of Madame Lefebvre.

Some hours passed without any new incident. I had altered the portrait of Adolphe Bonhard, coloured the hair and eyebrows, and added the widow's dress, and was quite satisfied with my own success. I felt assured now that so clever a man as M. Camille d'Herlan, in possession of this portrait, could not fail to recognise the original, even in a crowd of the limited dimensions possible to a railway station. In time for the earliest delivery in the morning, I posted the portrait for M. d'Herlan, and then there was nothing else to be done; my watching and waiting recommenced. They did not last long. While we were at breakfast on the following morning, Hannah, who usually discharged her cargo of gossip at that hour, informed us that she believed the Madame next door was 'unlucky;' and when I inquired the particular application of that latter epithet, which, in the mouth of the uncompromisingly Saxon Hannah, rather surprised me, she explained it by informing me that letters had been received that morning at No. 8, which made it necessary for Madame Lefebvre to leave her poor aunt at once, and return to Paris. 'It's her mother-in-law, I understand, as is very ill,' said Hannah, 'and Mrs Corner says as she's got to go to-night, and all the way to London Bridge too, which it's the quickest, though I believe there's another way. I can't understand it myself; I should say as one way for English Christians to get out of their own country, and go abroad to be cheated and poisoned, was quite enough. Anyways, the Madame has to part with her, and unless the young gentleman comes back again, she'll be lonely enough with only Bonne.'

It did seem as if Madame Bonhard were destined to be unfortunate, in the minds of those who knew nothing about the real story of the tenant of No. 8, but to me who did, the conclusion was equally irresistible and gratifying. I went out at my usual hour, and once more braved public opinion, and called at M. d'Herlan's chambers. He was strongly excited by the news I had to tell him, and desperately anxious to provide against the possibility of any blunder in our plan of proceeding. I gave him the likeness I had made of Madame Bonhard's widowed niece, and finally made him understand and agree to the impossibility of my following Madame Lefebvre to London Bridge, and pointing her out to him on the platform, as he had at first proposed. I assured him he did not make sufficient allowance for the excessive shrewdness and suspicion of Madame Bonhard, if he imagined that my appearance in so unusual a place could pass unnoticed by her.

'But what can he possibly know of your habits?' objected Camille; 'how is he to know that you do not frequently go to London Bridge?'

'How have I gotten all the casual information about him which I possess,' I asked M. d'Herlan, 'but from the gossip of servants? Do you suppose this kind of thing is not thoroughly reciprocal? Be sure Madame Bonhard knows all of my habits which servants can tell, and what is there they cannot?'

'But you had an object in knowing?'

'Of late, yes; but before I had the ghost of a

suspicion, I had heard the servants' talk. No, no, M. d'Herlan—I must remain quietly at home, when the young widow starts on her journey.'

'And I start with her, I trust,' said M. Camille, 'and De Beaucour meets us on the other side, and takes charge of my *compagnon de voyage*.'

'Just so,' I returned, 'you must trust to the portrait. Stay! a thought strikes me. Suppose you and I go and buy a bouquet, and you note it accurately; suppose I call at the last moment, or send, and present the bouquet. It is an idea quite consonant to French taste, and will furnish M. Adolphe with an additional touch of *vraisemblance* for his disguise. An Englishwoman would not encumber herself with such a thing; but a *soi-disant* Frenchwoman will know better than to refuse flowers, or leave them after her. If I succeed in giving them to her, assurance of your recognising her will be rendered doubly sure.'

M. Camille assented, and we went to Covent Garden, and purchased a fine, showy, autumnal bouquet, with a very luscious-looking crimson flower in the centre. How I hoped Mr Coxe would not make his appearance, and plague me about the names, the price, and the destination of the flowers. 'Look at it well,' I said to M. Camille, 'and make sure that you will know it again.'

M. Camille regarded the bouquet very closely, and then, assuring me that he would recognise it, if he saw it in the *Marché aux Fleurs*, he parted with me in order to go and prepare Fanny for his leaving her, on the threatened trip to Paris, that same evening.

My feelings were strangely mingled as I returned home, and walking up to the door of No. 8, left the bouquet, with the luscious crimson flower in its centre, with my compliments for Madame Lefebvre. Bonne answered me, and charged herself with my message. She was much altered, and the pallor of her face and nervousness of her manner were painfully remarkable. I made no delay, and did not look at her much. I knew I was doing right, and yet, somehow, I could not bear to encounter the intensely mournful, suffering, frightened expression of the woman's eyes. She looked like one who had lived all her life in a state of suspense. I fancied I could realise and enter into her feelings better than into those of any other person concerned, and the idea of all she must have suffered, and might still have to suffer, stirred my heart with a vague remorse. Of all the varieties of wretchedness to which the evil destiny of a woman can consign her in this world, surely that of being the wife of a political conspirator must be one of the worst.

And now my active share in this drama—the share which I hoped might never be known or suspected—was completed. I had nothing more to do. The time went on; and an hour before that at which the mail-train for Dover was to leave London Bridge, Madame Lefebvre departed from No. 8. Bonne did not attend her to the gate, the infirm old lady found strength and courage to do so. From our sitting-room window I watched the departure; and though I could not see the faces of the two, I could see that the young widow stepped into the cab with alacrity, and waved a farewell as it drove off. As it passed our gate, I caught a last glimpse of the black-crape bonnet and the white cap, which, but for me, might have been a fatally successful falsehood. Then my

nerves gave way, and I had to hurry from the room, to conceal from my mother the extraordinary and alarming fact that I was crying.

Here ends the story of my adventure in Pegwell Place, so far as it concerns me. I had not long to wait for intelligence of M. Camille d'Herlan's movements. He wrote to me on the second day after he left London. I transcribe a portion of his letter:

'All has been completely successful. My recognition of the original of the portrait was instantaneous. I got into the same carriage with the young widow, who carried her dainty bouquet with much solicitude. Nothing could be more admirable than the disguise—in manner, in accent, in the thousand little prettinesses, and forgive me, affections of a charming woman *en voyage*. The bouquet afforded a facile excuse for conversation, and I availed myself of it at once. We got on capitally; and in the intervals of silence I simulated sleep, and watched my companion closely; I looked for the wildness, for the abstracted smile, for all you had mentioned to me, and I found them every one. You are right; he has been trained into a species of insanity. As I watched the dark figure opposite, my eyes almost shut, and the peak of my travelling-cap well down, I saw her touch the front of her dress several times, feeling it carefully with her fingers as if for something precious hidden there, and then I knew the pistol was in her bosom. Well, we arrived, and I followed her closely from the boat to the passport-office, and then I saw in an instant that all was right. M. de Beaucour was standing in the shade, behind the official to whom she handed her passport. He and I exchanged a look, and I put forward my passport. Then M. de Beaucour opened a door, and said, very politely: "Pass this way, madame." She passed on; I followed her; and the next instant we were in a small room, with a sentry at the door, and two gendarmes had, not rough or cruel, but irresistible hold of her hands.

"The pistol is in his breast," I said, and M. de Beaucour stepped forward, removed the heavy mantle and the bonnet, and calmly unfastening the top buttons of the wretched boy's dress, produced the weapon which you had described to me. For one minute he struggled frantically; in another he was perfectly quiet; and he said nothing to me but "Traitor!" I did not like the sound of the word, I confess. It was soon and quietly done. A suit of man's clothes was in readiness, and he was rapidly dressed in them, the disguise being carefully packed up and carried to a carriage which was in waiting. Then M. de Beaucour took the boy's arm in his—he was thoroughly subdued by this time, and almost stupefied—and telling him he should not be roughly handled or restrained if he would but be quiet and yield to the inevitability of his position, he led him out, motioning to me to follow. All was quiet in the "Place." The train had started; the *douane* and station were empty of all but tired officials; there was not the least stir, not the faintest indication that anything unusual had taken place. We got into the carriage, and again I was opposite the boy. He looked wild and strange enough, now that the black hair (the tips showing the natural colour) was loose about his face, which was very pale. He looked up at the stars all the way, and sometimes his lips moved, but there was not any look of fear in his face; care, sorrow, defeat were there, but nothing

like fear. He had not been questioned; on the contrary, M. de Beaucour had enjoined silence, and he had not, after the first moment of his capture, uttered a word. We alighted at M. de Beaucour's house, and he led his prisoner into a small room off his bureau. And here my narrative must end; I am not permitted to repeat even the little which as yet I know of the discoveries to which the capture of Adolphe Bonhard (such is his real name) has led. In a short time, all Madame Lefebvre's boxes arrived from the *douane*, and the letters and other papers which you told me of were found to be of the utmost importance. I am permitted by M. de Beaucour to tell you that the revelation is so complete, so ruinous to the conspirators, that it renders even D'Aulnoy harmless for the future. Perfect secrecy has been secured, and the most dangerous and deadly plot ever hatched against the empire has been defeated without even the scandal of discussion, or the least damage to the prestige of power.'

Then followed a great deal which is unnecessary to transcribe. It concerned me; and magnified, after the French fashion, an accidental occurrence into a piece of heroism. I had only acted in a strange conjuncture with ordinary common sense, and to make so much of it appeared to me as if they were not accustomed to that line of conduct.

M. Camille d'Herlan then concluded by assuring me that the condition I had made should be strictly complied with, and that no harm should come to the boy.

'I have not seen him again,' he wrote, 'but I know he is in safety and well cared for, and though neither you nor I will be informed of exactly what becomes of him, I am desired to say that not only the acquiescence but the approbation of an illustrious personage has been obtained by M. de Beaucour for the carrying out of your wishes in this matter, and he is of opinion that some day you will hear of the young man, whose life you have most assuredly saved from the fatal consequences of his own fanaticism, as a loyal subject of the empire.'

M. Camille d'Herlan's letter was a week old when he returned. He had nothing more to tell me, and M. de Beaucour did not write. He sent me a message to the effect that he knew I would trust him, and he was right; I did trust him, and had no misgivings about the fate of the misguided boy who had been so nearly made the victim of a ruthless conspirator. To all external appearance, everything was tranquil at No. 8, and sometimes it seemed like a vision to me, that so insignificant a person as myself had been the totally unsuspected agent in defeating such a scheme. That Gaston D'Aulnoy knew in a few days that the scheme had failed, of course was certain, but my share in its failure he never could know. Adolphe was as ignorant on that point as he, and supposing he could ever again communicate with him, would be unable to enlighten him. As I went in and out, always attending to my business and very rarely seeing my neighbours, it had a strange effect on me to think of my unsuspected share in their destinies.

Late in September, M. Camille d'Herlan and Fanny Robertson were married, and went to Paris, where M. d'Herlan's prospects were of the brightest; and all things settled down into an extremely monotonous but comfortable state of jog-trot existence in Pegwell Place.

A few days before the quarter, Mr Coxé called on us in the evening as usual, and with much perturbation and displeasure informed us that he was not getting on well with the Madame at No. 8.

'I remember you didn't like my letting to foreigners, at the time, Mrs Miller, and really you were right. Everything was right at first, and nothing is right now; but what *can* you expect, Mrs Miller, from people who *have* nothing settled, no British Constitution, you know, and wine at breakfast, and nothing in the papers except plays and murders—what *can* you expect. Of course they can't know their own minds; it isn't likely.'

'Of course not, Mr Coxé,' said my mother, rather severely; 'and I hope you'll know better another time, and not let to foreigners. Of course one pities them, as one is bound to do, but we can do that quite as well at a distance.'

'How long has Madame Bonhard got the house for?' I asked.

'A year,' returned Mr Coxé; 'but I have a great mind to take it off her hands.'

'Pray do,' said my mother briskly, 'and do let us all be quiet and comfortable and Christianlike again, as long as railroads, and lecture-halls, and hospitals, and nonsense will let us. Let's have no more foreigners, so long as they leave us Pegwell Place.'

It was not long afterwards when, on a gloomy day, full of presages of the coming winter, Madame Bonhard and Bonne—whose careworn face was less haggard and wretched than it had been—went away from Pegwell Place as quietly as they had come. Mr Coxé was there to take the keys of the house and gate from his late tenant, and he saw them off very politely. Madame Bonhard left no card, 'P.P.C.'—which annoyed my mother; for Pegwell Place is scrupulously genteel upon such points.

'French manners too!' she remarked, contemptuously, and I did not say one word in defence of Madame Bonhard.

Postscript (added in 1867).—My mother's predictions have been realised. 'They' have pulled down Pegwell Place. She does not mind it so much, however, as her constant friend, Mr Coxé, is enriched by the occurrence, and she has not lived there for some years—not indeed since another of her apprehensions verified itself by my marriage.

ACROSS THE WALNUTS AND THE WINE.

In after-dinner talk
Across the walnuts and the wine.—*Tennyson.*

CONCERNING children (a channel into which our good hostess is certain to lead the conversation if she can), Mrs Housewife favoured us with a pleasant story.

'There has been a death in this house lately,' said she; 'and although it happened nearly a week ago, some of us have not got over it yet. My poor little Effie's canary succumbed to the pip. It was very touching to see her sorrow for her little favourite's sufferings, and her futile attempts to relieve them. "If I only knew *what* to do, mamma," said she, "to do it good! I have been looking into all the books for remedies, but there is nothing to help me."

"What books, my darling?" inquired I.

"Well, I've got the *Cookery-book*, dear mamma, because that's the only one about birds; and the

Domestic Medicine, because that's the only one about diseases."

'Yes,' added papa; 'she really did endeavour to combine her information in that way, upon the identical plan on which Mr Potts, in *Pickwick*, composed his articles on Chinese Metaphysics; but the absurdity did not end there. Our small Alice came into my study on an embassy—her sister being afraid, it seems, of my "making fun of her calamity"—to ask for White's *Selborne*, as though the canary were a British bird. I bade her look in the book-case, and crop all the information she pleased; when, to my astonishment, she suddenly cried out: "I've found it: here is a little book, papa, all about birds and illness!"

"What book, my dear?"

"*Miss Nightingale's Notes on Nursing.*"

To recompense himself, I suppose, for having had to listen to the above domestic narrative, Colonel Thunderbomb, as soon as the ladies had withdrawn, was so good as to favour us with an anecdote of genteel rascality. 'You remember Raleigh,' said he, addressing himself to Bitter Aloes, 'and how he used to win our money at the club, at pool? Well, I know you will be glad to hear that he has met with his match at last. He has got "picked up" in a very curious way. Raleigh was accustomed to frequent one of the rooms in the Quadrant, where he said he would have always "held his own" (which, as you know, meant something better than *that*), but for a certain Major Dubois, a Frenchman, who sometimes "divided" with him, but more often took the whole pool. At billiards, however, they were as nearly equal as could be, though each secretly thought himself the superior player, and was ready to back himself for money. Whatever they bet, however, they came about quits at the end of it all, so that a match between them grew quite monotonous, from the certainty that if Dubois won to-day, Raleigh would win on the morrow. They wanted some sort of novelty, since the excitement of gambling was thus in a manner neutralised; and at last the Frenchman proposed something. They had played against one another left-handed, with equal success, but now Dubois suggested that they should each bandage up one of their eyes. And so they went at it, like a couple of Cyclopes, for twenty pounds a side. The Frenchman won, and Raleigh would not play again, observing that the loss of an eye was the loss of at least fifteen points to him.

"Give me ten," says Dubois, "and I will play you for what you like, with my eye closed."

"Done!" said Raleigh. And he bet fifty pounds a game, and placed a plaster over one of his opponent's eyes with his own hands. The strangeness of the conditions of the wager attracted quite a crowd, and I went to see the thing played myself. But Dubois won with seeming ease, and offered to play again on the same terms, receiving five points instead of ten; which the other accepted. Raleigh lost that also, although he played quite up to his usual game.

"I can't understand it," said he to me, when he had paid his money; "but I am not such a fool as to try the thing again. That fellow can play every bit as well with one eye as with two."

'It was not, however, until many months afterwards that he found out why this was so. Dining with this very Dubois's cousin—an officer of Zouaves

—at "the Rag," Raleigh happened to speak of his relative's skill with the cue.

"Yes, yes," returned the Zouave simply; "Henri is excellent at the billiards; and it is the more extraordinary, because, as you are doubtless aware, he lost, when quite a boy, *all use of the left eye*."

"A clever fellow," observed Aloes, "to turn even an imperfection into an advantage."

"And a false scoundrel," remarked Housewife, with some indignation.

"The two characters are not incompatible, my good sir," returned the cynic in his philosophic manner. "Hypocrisy is sometimes commendable: we are told to affect a virtue even if we have it not."

Housewife's open countenance expressed the strongest disapprobation.

"What!" said Aloes combatively. "Perhaps you would rather a man should affect a vice, like Charley Lascelles?"

"I would rather a man seem worse than he is, than be worse than he seems," observed our host decisively, "though I know nothing about Charley Lascelles."

"Then I'll tell you," returned Aloes, with the air of a man who confers an obligation. "Charley Lascelles, an acquaintance of Thunderbomb yonder and of mine, had run through his money (it had been but a younger brother's portion) by consorting with divers kinds of bad company, and was looking out sharp last Christmas twelvemonth for the chance of laying hands on somebody else's. His pigeon-time was over, and he had himself become a sparrow-hawk. Nothing was left him in the way of capital, save an admirable wardrobe, tolerably preserved good-looks, and a profound dissimulation. His elder brother, upon whom he was likely to remain an incubus for life, was uncommonly desirous to get him well married."

"You like my brother Charley, I think," said he to Miss Piers (daughter to old Piers the Rotherhithe millionaire, who used to be called King of the Bargees), as they were sitting next to one another at dinner at some tremendous swell's house in the country; "at least he's always raving about you."

"Really, Sir William, I am astonished at you," replied she. "Mr Charles Lascelles is nothing to me except an agreeable—but I am afraid not very respectable—acquaintance."

"You're everything to him, however, by George!" returned the baronet. "It's your coldness that has made him such a profligate. You don't know what a sentimental chap he is underneath that frivolous manner. "I've nothing to live for," he has often said to me, "since Julia—your name is Julia, is it not?—since Julia has no hope to give me."

"But he never asked me for it, Sir William."

"Of course not; he's so shy. That's been the stumbling-block in poor Charley's way. The Countess of Bluemantle was dying for him when he was quite a lad; but he could never bring himself to ask her (feeling so acutely that he was only a commoner), and so she married her chaplain in despair. Come, do let me write him a letter, and say you are staying here: he will be down by the next train; I'll stake my life on that."

"No, Sir William; no. I have given him his answer. I confess I liked him very well, until—until I began to hear certain things about him. Oh, he's so wild!"

"It's you that have made him so, Julia—I beg your pardon, but I seem to fancy you are one of the family already. Lady Lascelles always speaks of you as Julia—it's all your cruelty. If you would give him the least encouragement, he would become another man. He would sacrifice anything for your sake."

"I doubt that, Sir William. Would he give up his cards, and his club, and his little dinners at Richmond—I can't keep my ears shut to what everybody says of him—and his dreadful habit of betting, and his horrid cigars?"

"Yes, Julia, yes," interrupted the baronet with eagerness. "Now, let this matter depend upon the very basis of self-sacrifice, if such is your pleasure. If you have heard what a victim my poor brother is to the vice of smoking—all, however, since you shook your lovely head at him (for if I'm to be your brother-in-law, I may tell the truth about your head) at the Caledonian Ball. If you ask his friends, you will hear that he never used to smoke in his early days."

"The word of an English baronet is quite sufficient for me," said Miss Piers, who is rather fond of baronets, a species very rare in the vicinity of Rotherhithe.

"Very well, Julia: then I swear to you, upon my honour, that before he knew you he did *not* smoke. If he is now never seen without a cigar in his mouth: if tobacco is meat, drink, and clothing—wife and family—everything in the world to him, all I can say is, it's your fault. I daresay it comforts him, in the absence of those home-ties which cruel fate—that's *you*—have denied him. If he smokes like a steam-engine, if his very clothes are saturated with it—and I daresay you've smelt his whiskers!"

"No, indeed, sir," answered the young lady indignantly, "but I don't doubt that he is a victim to that horrid vice."

"Good. Now, you shall see him, for your sweet sake, emancipate himself from that moral slavery: he shall come down here to-morrow with all his cigar-cases and pipes, and remaining stock of weeds, and sacrifice them all at his Julia's shrine. You shall retain the whole of them in your own possession. His friends will, of course, offer to supply him: I have got some very choice Cabanas myself, which it will cost him the severest pangs to refuse. But he *will* refuse them; yes, he will, mark my words—there's Lady Boniface nodding at your mother like a Chinese mandarin: you are going to leave the dining-room—I have your permission, then, to send for poor dear Charley, upon the basis of self-sacrifice!"

"And upon no other," interrupted the heiress gravely. "I will not intrust my happiness to him without being assured that he is able, for my sake, to conquer at least one of his unfortunate habits."

"He will conquer them all," said Sir William gallantly, "and be well repaid for his devotion."

"So Charley Lascelles went down by express to my Lord Boniface's, with three-and-thirty cigar-cases, fifteen meerschaum pipes (some of them very curiously painted), and half a chest of the most excellent cigars, to none of which he was to put his longing lips. Indeed, they were all stowed away in Miss Piers's own room, so that they imparted quite a flavour to that highly respectable young lady, and drew upon her the scandalous imputation of indulging in cigarettes herself. But Charley never broke his resolution, although Sir

William owned to Julia that his poor brother got severely rallied in the smoking-room upon his new-born austerity. He even took a solemn vow never to touch tobacco again if Julia would only become his wife, which, eventually, she consented to do.

'And did he keep his vow?' asked Colonel Thunderbomb, who is incredulous about the self-denial of young gentlemen.

'O yes; he kept it. Indeed, he had no temptation to break it, for the fact is, that the habit of Smoking was just that particular and only vice in which Charley Lascelles never had indulged. The cigars and pipes had all been borrowed from his friends; and the half-chest of weeds procured direct from Benson's on Sir William's credit, who afterwards smoked them himself.'

'And how did this marriage "upon the basis of self-sacrifice" turn out?' inquired I.

'Well, it went on all right until some malicious fellow—a disappointed suitor of the heiress, I believe—disclosed to her poor Charley's little artifice; since which, things have not gone quite so smoothly.'

'Well, I call it a scandalous stratagem,' observed Housewife, with an indignant glance at the narrator.

And so should I, if I did not know that the whole story was an ingenious invention of Mr Bitter Aloes, who delights in eliciting sparks of virtuous indignation from our worthy host.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

CERTAIN friends of the late Professor Faraday have held a meeting to consider about a statue to the memory of that much-lamented philosopher, and the place of its erection. The government are to be asked whether they will take any part in this praiseworthy undertaking; and it is expected that a good sum will be raised by subscriptions, on which follows the question as to the sculptor. We trust that, in settling this question, the only consideration will be: Who can give us the best likeness in marble of the man whom it is intended thus to honour. For such a statue, Science may surely claim a resting-place in the venerable Abbey.—A similar project has been started in Ireland for a statue to the late Earl of Rosse, who, by his beneficence and scientific achievements, endeared his name to his countrymen, and made it famous, wherever physical science is cultivated.

Dr Crace-Calvert is delivering a course of lectures at the Society of Arts on Chloride of Sodium, or common salt, the products obtained from it, and their applications to arts and manufactures: a subject on which much that is singularly interesting can be said.—A paper on 'Railways and their Management,' discloses a few facts well worth notice. Of the railways of the empire, one-sixth of the mileage is in Scotland, and produces one-ninth of the gross revenue; Ireland, with one-seventh of the mileage, produces not more than one-twentieth of the revenue. Scotland has one mile of railway for every 1460 of her population; England, one for every 2257; Ireland, one mile only for every 3260 persons. To manage, or rather mismanage, the two thousand miles of railway in Ireland, there are from thirty to forty

different boards of directors, some of them with about twenty-five miles of railway to look after. No wonder that it costs more to send a parcel from Dublin to Armagh than from London to Belfast! The author of the paper, Mr R. F. Fairlie, C.E., makes some important suggestions as to improvements and economy in rolling-stock, and better methods in the management of trains, of which we hope to give an account on a future occasion. Meanwhile, it may be stated as a general proposition, that with proper management, railways may become as respectable and profitable as they are now the reverse.

The progress of great engineering-works in Scotland has been made the subject of an address to the Royal Scottish Society of Arts by Mr G. Robertson. Among the interesting particulars therein contained, the following, which shews that as the water in a port is deepened, so does the revenue increase, is worth notice. In 1800, when the depth of the Clyde at Glasgow was three feet only at high-water, the annual revenue of the port was not more than L3320. The depth was increased to twelve feet in 1825, and the revenue amounted to L8367. In 1863, the depth was twenty-two feet, and the revenue L118,083, which in 1867 had grown to L131,862. As the authorities intend that the depth shall not be less than twenty-two feet at neap-tides all the way up to Glasgow, a further increase of revenue may be anticipated. The grumblers in other ports may learn from this how intimate is the connection between deep water and prosperity.

Another fact mentioned on the same occasion should be interesting to all who drink water. Loch Katrine supplies to Glasgow daily 21,200,000 gallons of water, perhaps the purest in Scotland; it is nine times purer than that supplied to London; and yet the people of Glasgow swallow every year one thousand tons of foreign matter contained in the water of that romantic and sparkling lake.

It is good news to be told, on the authority of the Metropolitan Board of Works, that the blamable delay which has taken place in the finishing of the Thames Embankment is now at an end, so far as foot-passengers are concerned. A foot-way all along the river-front will be opened in the course of the summer from Westminster to the Temple; but the roadway cannot be finished until after the Metropolitan Railway directors shall have built their tunnel.—A new commercial improvement—the docks at Millwall—is worth notice; for these docks are the largest on the Thames, occupying with the warehouses 204 acres, and the entrance is so deep and capacious that vessels may be taken in before and after high-water. Modern appliances to facilitate loading and unloading of ships have been adopted; the cranes and hoists are worked by hydraulic machinery, and with all this, a large portion of that dreary swampy waste, the Isle of Dogs, has been converted into a scene of industry.

It is a familiar experiment with an electro-magnet to lay a sheet of paper over the poles of the magnet, and sprinkle iron filings thereon, for the purpose of watching the curious figures and curves which they form under the influence of the magnetism. The figures thus produced are known as 'magnetic phantoms,' and a wish has often been expressed that they could be rendered permanent: the wish may now be realised by two methods recently suggested. One is to coat the paper with wax or stearine, and when the phantoms are formed,

to soften the coat by holding over it a hot iron, when the filings sink, and become firmly imbedded as the coating cools. The other is to impregnate sheets of paper with ferrocyanide of potassium, and to develop the phantoms with a fine kind of magnetic iron sand found in Norway. When developed, hydrochloric gas is passed over them for a few seconds; the sand is then shaken off, the paper is washed in water, and presently the whole form and details of the phantom are seen permanently fixed by small blue dots and circles, which represent the grains of sand. The sheets thus prepared can be bound in a book, and kept for reference, which, since phantoms have ceased to be mere curiosities, is important. It is now known that they reveal to the operator the condition of the poles of the magnet with which he has been working.

A few interesting facts in which mercury plays a remarkable part are worth mention. Certain Dutch chemists discovered that plants cannot live in an atmosphere which contains vapour of mercury. Bousisingault, of Paris, found that this noxious effect could be neutralised by introducing sulphur into the atmosphere; and further, that sulphur, when exposed to vapour of mercury, takes on a coat which resembles iron, and does not easily rub off, or soil the fingers. This coat is sulphuret of mercury. Here, therefore, is a suggestion which may be turned to account by enterprising artists. Let them melt sulphur, and cast it into statuettes, friezes, mouldings, flowers, and so forth, expose them to vapour of mercury, and they will obtain a number of articles all wearing a metallic appearance, which may be found useful for ornamental purposes. The French chemist, taking a wide view of the subject, asks, whether sulphur, which is at times found in the atmosphere, may not play an important part in neutralising the effects of noisome vapours, or the deleterious miasm which rises from marshes and the banks of rivers in hot countries. And may we not ask, whether it will ever be found possible to stay the progress of an epidemic by flooding the atmosphere with fumes of sulphur?

A mechanician in the United States has made experiments with a view to determine the cost at which electric light can be produced, and to compare it with that of other lights. He finds that it costs less to produce a strong electric light than a weak one: that with one thousand cells of an ordinary Grove's battery he can get a light equal to somewhat more than five thousand candles, and the cost of these thousand cells for one hour would be about five guineas and a half. With a Smee's battery, the cost would be less; while with a thermo-electric battery, as much electricity may be developed from one pound of coal as would give a light equal to one hundred and forty-four candles. But if the total energy in one pound of pure carbon were converted into light, it would be equivalent to one candle burning for seventeen months. The gas from one pound of coal would give a light equal to that of a candle for fifteen hours; one pound of gas will give a similar light for seventy-five hours. The conclusion drawn is, that in our ordinary methods of gas-lighting we utilise less than one per cent. of the energy stored in the coal; and that 'we may reasonably expect that electricity, as developed by the thermo-electric battery, the magneto-electric machine, or some still more efficient apparatus, will ere long open to us the maximum of artificial light at the minimum of cost.

New York has been astonished by a mechanical Frankenstein—a 'steam-man' that walks up and down the streets dragging a carriage after it. The figure stands nearly eight feet in height, carries a furnace in his stomach, a boiler in his chest, vents the smoke through the crown of his hat, and blows a whistle fixed in his mouth. His legs, made of cranks, levers, and springs, move somewhat after the manner of human legs, and on a level road will travel a mile in two minutes. The New Yorkers may well be astonished; but it remains to be proved whether this new Yankee notion is really of any use. The inventor offers to construct any number of steam-men at three hundred dollars apiece.

THE 'HULKS' IN THE MEDWAY.

Is that wild river 'Medway' called,
May many a quaint old hulk be seen
Armoured half-up in sea-weed green,
With limpets thickly on't installed.
Rude figure-heads, with many a scar
Indented, look a hundred ways,
And seem in grief for long-gone days,
When proudly rode the man-o'-war.
From portholes whence the cannon's eye
Once flashed defiance on our foes,
Some fragrant flower soft incense throws,
And gentle looks peer lovingly.
The sentry by the gangway stands,
But what he guards one cannot tell,
For all about is peaceable
As sylvan lakes of fairy lands.
Upon the deck where warrior feet
Once hurried vengeful to and fro,
I've seen a butterfly swoop low,
And nestle on a wall-flower sweet.
Ah, thoughts that well might wake a sigh,
Steal o'er my soul the while I gaze
On these old wrecks of other days,
That in the lonely Medway lie.

A NEW NOVEL.

Next Saturday will appear in this Journal the first portion of an Original Novel, entitled

BLONDEL PARVA,

By the Author of

'MAXIMS BY A MAN OF THE WORLD.'

The Publishers of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL beg to direct the attention of CONTRIBUTORS to the following notice:

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Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.